

SKANÁ, THE SPA AT TURNING STONE UNVEILS AUTHENTIC AMERICAN INDIAN SWEAT LODGE

Skaná Spa's Sweat Lodge Ceremony Features Traditional Storytelling, Drumming, Chants and Prayers That Have Been Used For Centuries as a Way of Spiritually Cleansing Body and Soul

VERONA, NY (August 1, 2007)-Skaná, the Spa at Turning Stone in upstate New York is proud to be one of the only spas in the world to offer an authentic sweat lodge ceremony for its guests. An enterprise of the Oneida Indian Nation, Turning Stone introduced the sweat lodge with an evening ceremony on July 29.

American Indians have used the sweat lodge for centuries as a means of cleansing the body and purging the spirit of impurities while expressing gratitude to the Creator and giving thanks for a personal gift of rebirth.

Turning Stone's three-hour sweat lodge experience features interpretative storytelling, drumming, chants and prayers led by Native American guide, Kakwiranoron (pronounced Gagwila-nolon) Cook. Cook grew up in a family where sweat lodge ceremonies were part of day-to-day life with his mother's people, the Oglala Lakota (Sioux) in the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. His father is a Mohawk Indian from Central New York.

Cook oversaw the construction of the sweat lodge, which will be used year-round. It's about four-feet high and able to hold up to 15 people. The oval-shaped lodge has a frame made of red willow trees which are constructed in such a way as to represent the four quarters of the universe. The whole lodge is the universe in an image, and the two-legged, four-legged and winged peoples and all things of the world are contained within it.

There is a fire pit in the center of the sweat lodge, and one outside the lodge where rocks are subjected to intense heat. The rocks represent Grandmother Earth and the indestructible and everlasting nature of the Creator. Cook said the sweat lodge ceremony is often an intense experience that feels like a rebirth for many people. "You come out feeling energized and transformed," he said. "It can really be moving for people."

Nominated by Spa Magazine as "Best New Spa of 2007," Skaná Spa features a 33,000-square-foot state-of-the-art spa, salon and fitness facility. Skaná Spa treatments, based on American Indian healing therapies use nature's gentle healing herbs, leaves and flowers combined with state-of-the-art massage and skincare techniques to soothe and nurture guests from head to toe.

Skaná Spa was named to Conde Nast Traveler's "2007 Hot List" and Spa Magazine's "Hot 100." Skaná Spa guests stay at the luxurious AAA Four Diamond Lodge at Turning Stone, recently named U.S. and Canada's "Most Excellent Resort" by Conde Nast Johansens Luxury Travel Guide. Turning Stone is the largest resort, spa, gaming, entertainment and golf complex in the Northeast, and is one of AAA's top 20 diamond-award winning resorts in North America. Nestled in the breathtaking Mohawk Valley Region of New York State, Turning Stone is just 35 miles east of Syracuse Hancock International Airport.

For information and reservations, please call 800-771-7711 or visit www.skanaspa.com.

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